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ABSTRACT

As teacher educators lead preservice teachers into 21st-century classrooms, they must employ models that take into account standards and accountability and employ assessment techniques that assure both the teacher educator and the potential teacher that the performance required and exhibited in field experiences is related to the real world classroom and is at an acceptable level of performance. The use of portfolios in reading practicums is a useful medium for substantiating teaching experiences and level of performance. This paper describes the preservice elementary reading program at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, which includes a reading methods course and a reading practicum that are taken concurrently. The paper also describes first-time portfolio use in the reading practicum; documentation of field experiences in the reading practicum; a means of self-evaluation for preservice teachers; a means of self-reflection for preservice teachers; and an opportunity for improved performance-based assessment for the supervisor of the field experience. Evaluation forms from the courses are included. (SM)

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Portfolio Use in the Reading Practicum

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Portfolio Use in the Reading Practicum

As teacher educators lead preservice teachers into the classroom of the 21st century, we must employ models that take into account standards and accountability and employ assessment techniques that assure both the teacher educator and the potential teacher that the performance required and exhibited in field experiences is related to the real world classroom and is at an acceptable level of performance. The use of the portfolio in a reading practicum is an excellent medium for substantiating teaching experiences and level of performance.

Description of the Reading Course/Practicum

The core of the preservice elementary reading program at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette includes a reading methods (survey of developmental reading) course and a reading practicum for a total of six credit hours. Scheduled in a time block, the two courses are taken concurrently. Elementary education majors are exposed to theories of the reading process, instructional approaches and strategies for the teaching of reading, and diverse reading materials. At the same time, the students are provided with the opportunity to apply newly learned pedagogy in field experiences at both the primary and intermediate levels.

Balance is achieved as the preservice teacher experiences use of commercial reading programs (basal), the directed reading-thinking activity, skill instruction, and language experience at the primary level. At the intermediate level, the preservice teacher moves into more holistic instructional experiences, using adolescent novels, literature-based instruction, teacher-created pre-, during-, and post-reading activities, and student self-evaluation.

An overall balance in preparation and experiences is achieved as students are guided and monitored over the course of the twelve teaching sessions of approximately one hour each. The preservice teachers are guided to include experiences listed in **Attachments A and B (READ 311 Primary Grade and Upper Grade Practicum Requirements**).

First-Time Portfolio Use in the Reading Practicum

The lists of **experiences** for each of the field placements, primary and intermediate level, were used by the instructor to create **sample tables of contents.** (See **Attachments C and D**.) The preservice teacher could use the sample as given or modify it in order to organize the portfolio.

The portfolio in the reading practicum served the following purpose:

(1) Documentation of teaching experiences in field-based practicum.
(2) A means of self-evaluation for the preservice teacher.
(3) A means of self-reflection for the preservice teacher.
(4) An opportunity for improved performance-based assessment for the supervisor of the field experience.

Documentation of Field Experiences in the Reading Practicum

In regard to documentation of experiences, the portfolio did aid the preservice teacher in substantiating various experiences. **Rebecca Adams**, for example, created a grid related to upper level teaching experiences and lesson planning/lesson objectives. (See **Attachment E**.)

A Means of Self-Evaluation for the Preservice Teacher

The following **self-evaluation by Tujuana Chambers** after the primary teaching experience attests to the portfolio being a means of self-evaluation for the preservice teacher (See **Attachment F.**):

Shana Bernard wrote, "I definitely need more experience in the classroom. I have trouble organizing time and getting to understand the students' thoughts."

A Means of Self-Reflection for the Preservice Teacher

At the end of the course, the preservice teachers were given a questionnaire and were asked to respond to the following:

Portfolios were required at the completion of the field experiences, both primary and upper level. In reflecting on the process of creating each portfolio, how did you benefit from the task?

These were some of the responses:

"The task caused me to stay organized throughout my teaching, knowing I would have to compile a portfolio in the end. It also allowed me to see the vast number of techniques I have actual experience in."

"It allowed me to see what was accomplished."

"When preparing my portfolio, I came to realize that organization is a must."

"I was able to see everything I experienced in an organized manner. I was able to reflect on different experiences as I compiled the information. It reinforced my goals I set out to accomplish."

"I enjoyed doing the portfolios. It made me see just how much my students actually participated and if my teaching paid off."

It was a good way to reflect on what I did - both to reinforce the good and maybe see what could be done better."

"I think it helped me to organize all that I had learned and showed me all the things I had done. It gave me a real feeling of accomplishment."

An Opportunity for Improved Performance-Based Assessment for the Supervisor of the Field Experience

The primary level portfolio was evaluated by the professor using the following criteria:

Content 17/17
Organization 5/5
Professional appearance 3/3

Seventeen out of seventeen students felt comfortable with the instructor evaluating the portfolio. Fifteen out of seventeen students were satisfied with the evaluation criteria as described above. However, two students suggested that comment sheet be included or guidelines for acceptable or unacceptable performance.

As a result, a **rubric** has been created for use by the instructor for evaluating the primary level portfolio during the upcoming semester (See **Appendix G.**).

The upper level portfolio was evaluated via **peer review** and a an average grade on lesson plans. (See **Attachment H.**). Overall, the preservice teachers did not like peer evaluation, although some liked seeing others' portfolios.

Comments in regard to peer review included:

"I have a hard time grading my peers, but it gave me a professional feel."

"I think peer assessment was appropriate here since it was already modeled as to how a portfolio should be assessed. "

References

McLaughlin, M., & Vogt, M. (1996). Portfolios in teacher education. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Martin, D. (1999). The portfolio planner: Making professional portfolios work for you. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

During the primary level field experience, you should experience the following:

1. Write six lesson plans, each including behavioral objectives, specific instructional procedures and materials, time estimates, and both student and teacher evaluations.
2. Utilize informal assessment procedures, e.g., interest inventory, sight word assessment running record.
3. Experience use of a published reading series (basal) and supporting materials, modifying as needed to meet the needs and interests of the students being taught.
4. Utilize the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA).
5. In a cooperative group effort, plan a directed reading-thinking activity, distributing steps of the DRTA over three or four teaching sessions, in a manner which enhances comprehension, maximizes student involvement, and motivates students to read the basal and beyond.
6. Provide explicit instruction, in the context of the DRTA, in new vocabulary and at least one other skill.
7. Provide practice after vocabulary instruction and after skill instruction (both guided practice and independent practice) and insure application of each.
8. Evaluate progress in acquiring new vocabulary and skill taught.
9. Utilize whole group, small group, and individualized instruction as needed in order to meet the needs of all students in your group.
10. Utilize a variety of materials, both commercial and teacher-made.
11. Employ major elements of a Balanced Reading Program: Reading TO Children (Teacher Read-Alouds); Reading WITH Children (Shared Book Experience, Shared Poems); Reading BY Children (Reader's Theater, SSR). Consider using a big book with accompanying student copies.
12. Incorporate oral language activities and writing activities (shared writing, guided writing, independent writing) into as many lessons as possible.
13. Employ the Language Experience Approach (LEA): (1) motivation/stimulation, (2) discussion, (3) dictation/recording, (4) reading of dictation (1 session), and (5) follow-up (during the session(s) that follow).
14. Utilize children's literature, e. g., pattern books, Caldecott Award Books, Big Books, ... in order to develop one or more of the following (a) basic literacy concepts, (b) sight words, (c) vocabulary meaning, (d) phonics, (e) use of context clues, (f) knowledge and appreciation of genre or authors, (g) enhancement of interest-in and attitude toward reading and books, (h) comprehension, e.g., predicting outcomes.

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During the upper level field practicum, you should experience the following:

1. Write six lesson plans, each including objectives, specific instructional procedures and materials, time estimates, and both student and teacher evaluations.

2. Administer a group interest inventory.

3. Administer the San Diego Graded Word List to each student in your group as an estimate of independent, instructional and frustration word recognition levels and interpret the results of each.

4. Construct a cloze test to serve as an estimate of comprehension level (independent, instructional or frustration level) for each student.

5. Administer and interpret the cloze test.

6. Employ a literature-based approach to reading instruction, specifically whole-group reading of a core book (trade book).

7. Utilize appropriate prereading activities (e.g., Yopp & Yopp, pp. 17-41) during reading activities (e.g., Yopp & Yopp, pp. 44-67, and postreading activities (e.g., Yopp & Yopp, pp. 70-94).

8. Select and develop new vocabulary or concepts (approximately three or more) and/or employ VSS in order to enhance understanding of the selection.

9. Incorporate meaningful writing activities into your lessons, e.g., learning logs, journals (dialogue, response or buddy), admit slips, exit slips.

10. Employ Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) to enhance student's appreciation for reading for pleasure.

11. Infuse various reading materials into your lessons, e.g., the newspaper, magazines, poetry, jokes, riddles, history of upcoming holidays, other books by core book author, information about authors, reference books.

12 Read aloud to your students.

13. Evaluate student progress through a teacher-made test.

14. Incorporate student self-evaluations.

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READ 311 **Primary Level Portfolio**

Table of Contents

1. List of Required/Suggested Experiences
2. Lesson Plans 1-6 Grade ____ / Date Sept. ___ - Oct. ___)
3. Interest Inventory and Results
4. Informal Assessment (Pretesting) and Results
   - Sight Word Knowledge
   - New Vocabulary
5. Use of Published Reading Program (Basal)
   and Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)
   - Cooperative Block Plan
   - Evidence of Modification
   - Modification to Meet Diverse Learner Needs
6. Evidence of Use of Direct Instruction in New Vocabulary*

7a.
   - Guided practice
   - Independent Practice

   Evidence of Use of Direct Instruction in a Skill*

7b.
   - Guided Practice
   - Independent Practice

   *(Use of *How to Teach a Skill* / M. Hunter Lesson Cycle)

8. Evaluation of Student Progress
   - New Vocabulary
   - Skill
9. Evidence of Whole Group Instruction
   Evidence of Small Group Instruction
   Evidence of Individualization
10. Evidence of Use of Varied Instructional Aids and Materials
11. Use of a Balanced Reading Program
    - Reading TO Children
    - Reading WITH Children
    - Reading BY Children
12. Use of Oral Language Activities
    Use of Writing Activities
13. Use of Language Experience Approach
    Motivation, Discussion, Dictation, Rereading Dictation
    Follow-up Rereading Follow-up Activity
14. Use of Children's Literature
15. Sample Student Portfolio
    - Running Record
16. Over-all Self-Evaluation
17. Evidence of Use of Louisiana Elementary English Language Arts Content Standards

READ 311 **Upper Level Portfolio**

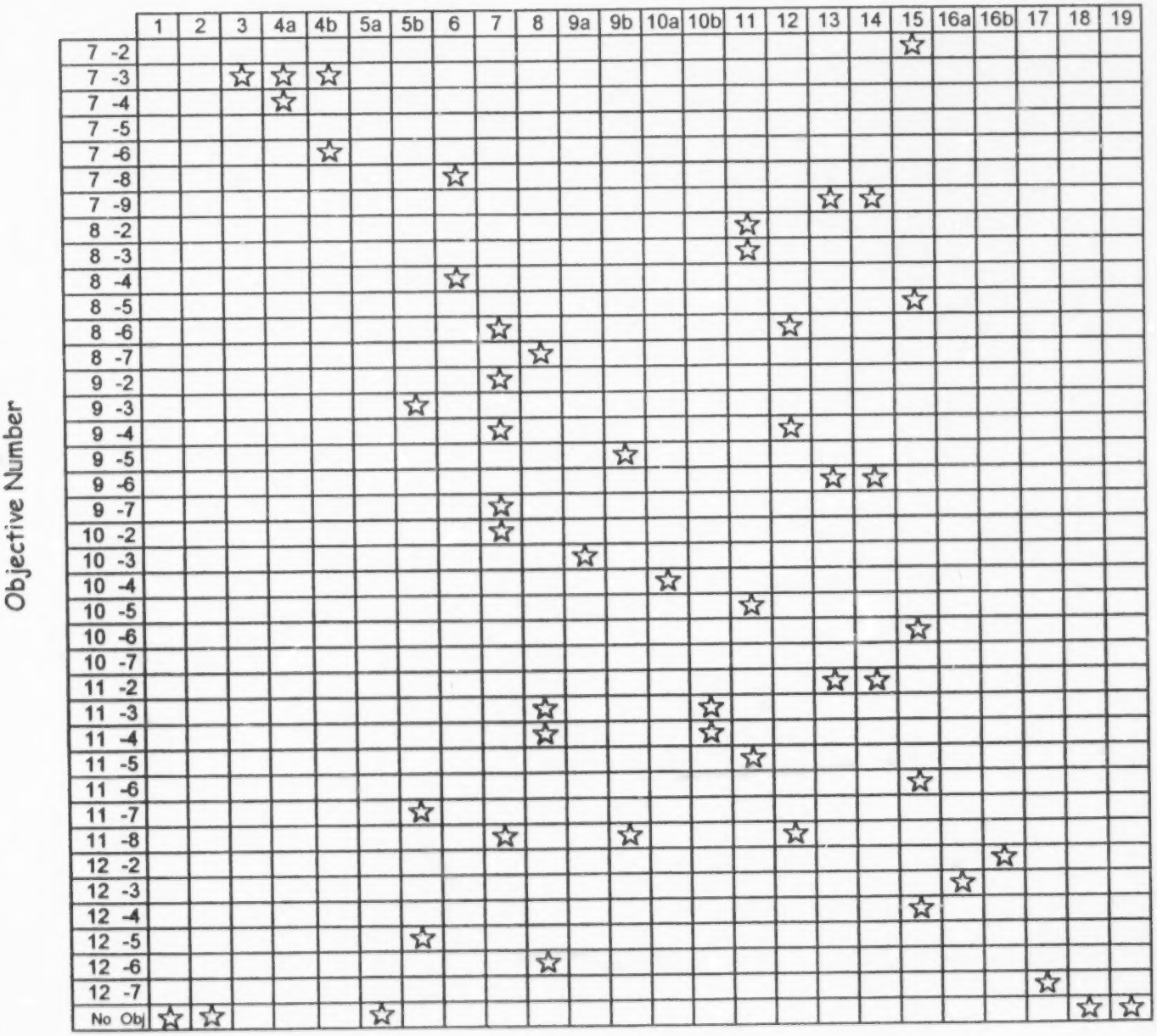
Table of Contents

1. List of Required/Suggested Experiences
2. Lesson Plans 7-12 Grade ____ / Date: Mar ___ - Apr. ___)
3. Group Interest Inventory and Results
   Informal Assessment Results
4. Word Recognition Levels (San Diego Graded Word List)
5. Comprehension (Cloze Test)
6. Use of a Literature-Based Approach to Reading instruction
   (Core Book Approach)
   6a.Core Book Story Map
   6b. Rationale fo Novel Use
   6c.Tentative Block Plan
   6d. Modification to Meet Diverse Learner Needs
7. Use of pre- (___) , during (___) , and post- reading (___) activities
   (selected from Yopp and Yopp text)
8a. Evidence of Use of Direct Instruction in New Vocabulary* and/or use of
   Vocabulary Self-Selected Strategy
   Guided practice
   Independent Practice
   *(Use of *How to Teach a Skill* / M. Hunter Lesson Cycle)
8b. Evidence of Instruction in a Skill
   (selected from *Objectives for Literature-Based Reading Lessons*)
9. Use of meaningful writing activities, e.g. journals
10. Use of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)
11. Use of varied reading materials for SSR, enrichment, and extension activities
   __ other trade books
   __ newspapers
   __ poetry
   __ joke or riddle books
   __ magazines
   __ computer generated materials, e.g. cross word puzzle
   __ other
12. Use of teacher read-alouds
13. Evaluation of student progress
   New Vocabulary
   Skill
14. Use of student self-evaluation
15. Sample Student Portfolio
16. Over-all Teacher Self-Evaluation
17. Evidence of Use of Louisiana Elementary English Language Arts Content
   Standards

Location of Portfolio Elements:

Rebecca Adams

Table of Content Numbers



Tujuana Chambers

Dr. E. Webre

READ 311

10-25-99

Overall Self Evaluation

In the beginning of this primary field experience, I had no idea what to expect or how I would perform. I am pleased to say that I did not do a bad job but I do not feel I did a good job either. When putting my portfolio together, I realized there were some important areas I did not cover in my lesson plans. The number one problem I ran across is my failure to make modifications for the diverse learner. I did have an advanced child in my group and I failed to keep her challenged; therefore, she was not always paying attention.

There were times when I felt really good about what I was doing and why I was doing it. When the children showed interest in what I had to say or show them, it made me want to teach more. I was pleased with the materials I prepared for my group because they were age appropriate and attractive. I did not know in the beginning if I would be able to be creative enough to hold the children's attention, but I did not do too bad. The most rewarding experience I had was on the last day. During the post-assessment, the children showed improvement on their vocabulary and reading skills. That proved to me that my time there was well spent.

In six visits, I have witnessed how difficult and time consuming it is for an elementary teacher to organize the classroom, provide individual attention to students, and maintain order. I, myself, have experienced my own difficult and time consuming elements which consisted of preparing lesson plans, assessing, managing students, and teaching. I realize it is a challenge but it also has its rewards.

Preservice Teacher _____

__ Spring __Fall, 2000

__ Primary
__ Upper Elementary

READ 311 Portfolio Evaluation

Content	Inadequate (0-12 points)	Adequate (13- 14 points)	Thorough (15-16 points)	Exceptional (17 points)
_____	Several items are missing, incomplete, or poorly documented.	Includes many items. Some items are incomplete or poorly documented.	Includes most items. Documentation is satisfactory.	Includes all items listed. Demonstrates both depth and breath.

Organization	Inadequate (0- 2 points)	Adequate (3 points)	Thorough (4 points)	Exceptional (5 points)
_____	Poorly organized.	Organized, but additional organizational aids are needed.	Most items can be located easily.	All documented items can be located easily.

Appearance	Inadequate (0-1 points)	Adequate (2 points)	Exceptional (3 points)
____	Unprofessional appearance, e.g. poor handwriting, scratch-outs....	Satisfactory appearance.	Typed or model manuscript/ cursive employed. Professional appearance.

____/25 Total

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Upper Grade Level Experience Portfolio

Name _____

Portfolio/Notebook(__ __ __ __) = _____ + _____ = **Credit** _____ /25 points
Peer Review Average *L. P. Credit

Contents should include items listed in sample Table of Contents distributed by instructor.

Organization should parallel Table of Contents organization so that documentation of experiences can be easily located.

****

In-Class Use

(Peer Review)

Notebook was presented to/shared with peer group.

Group Members: _____
_____
_____
_____

1_____	Contents (15)	15	14	13	12
Student	Organization (5)	5	4	3	2
2_____	Contents (15)	15	14	13	12
Student	Organization (5)	5	4	3	2
3_____	Contents (15)	15	14	13	12
Student	Organization (5)	5	4	3	2
4 _____	Contents (15)	15	14	13	12
Student	Organization (5)	5	4	3	2

****

* Lesson Plan Credit:

Lesson Plan Average:	25.0	5 points
Lesson Plan Average:	24.9-23.1	4 points
Lesson Plan Average:	23.0 - 22.0	3 points
Lesson Plan Average:	21.9 - 20.1	2 points
Lesson Plan Average:	20.0 or below	1 point

References

McLaughlin, M., & Vogt, M. (1996). Portfolios in teacher education. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Martin, D. (1999). The portfolio planner: Making professional portfolios work for you. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.